



Longing for the Lamb ~ March 10, 2019

OPEN

Lent started March 6 (Ash Wednesday), according to the traditional Church calendar. Lent reflects the forty days that Jesus was in the wilderness. It is a time when Christians often give up something. Now, this can be either a meaningful or mechanical exercise.

However, Lent is still a great spiritual practice to prepare our hearts for the **sorrow** of Good Friday and the **celebration** of Easter. This Lent we are studying Scriptures that help us grasp the truth of **The Glory of the Lamb**.

Today we tackle what it means to long for the Lamb of God? We must behold Him (see John 1:29) and actively believe that He can forgive our sins. A very typical (i.e. foreshadowing) Old Testament story shows us how to long for the Lamb of God.

DIG

Read the amazing story of Abraham and Isaac from **Genesis 22:1-18**.

What are the ways in which Jesus is portrayed in this story? (Note that God sent Abraham fifty miles north from Beersheba to Moriah, so he could have been atop the site of the Temple or Golgotha.)

How is Abraham's obedience described in **Hebrews 11:17-19**? Derek Kidner suggests that Abraham was "enabled, in the surrender of his son, to mirror God's still greater love, while his faith gives him a first glimpse of resurrection."

How is the promise given to Abraham in **verse 18** being fulfilled today? In what way does this story relate to the challenges we face every day – see **Roman 8:31-32**.

In light of this story about Abraham and Isaac, what is the spiritual tension in which believers live today? **Looking backward**, we know the redemption promises are fulfilled in the Lamb of God, slain for our sin. **Looking forward**, we know the end of the age will culminate in the ultimate glorification of the Lamb of God. We live in between these two amazing realities.

How do we live in this good but challenging tension? In his book **The Throne, The Lamb, And The Dragon** Paul Spilsbury writes,

Revelation is a book about Jesus, the Lamb who was slaughtered and whose death and resurrection make God's kingdom a reality on earth. Revelation also makes clear that those who want to follow the Lamb are called not only to continue his work in the world but also to share his experience of suffering. We will share in his victory, certainly, but not before we have shared in his death. This is one of Revelation's most pointed challenges.

There are three things that we can do as we live in this tension...

Reaffirm - Read I Corinthians 1:18; 2:1-5 and Romans 1:16 - How do these verses help us deal with the objection that the Gospel is inadequate, foolish, or weak?

Rest - Read Philippians 3:10 and Matthew 11:28-30 - How do we enter into the sufferings of Christ, yet also experience His peace and rest? How do believers live out the truth when a seed dies it will yield life – see John 12:24?

Reap - Read Luke 10:2 and Revelation 1:4-6 - Can you see how the call to share the Gospel of the Lamb of God is related to the glory of the Lamb?

REFLECT

The Lamb of God may not impress the wise and powerful. Yet Jesus' selfless sacrifice conquered the power of sin! As His followers, let's learn what it means to long for the Lamb of God and share Him with others. We are not called to overpower or outsmart but simply to say as John the Baptist did, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

A. B. Simpson, founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, longed for a deeper experience of God. In his pamphlet "[Himself](#)" he records what God said to him in this journey,

My child, just take Me, and let Me be in you the constant supply of all this, Myself." And when at last I got my eyes off my sanctification, and my experience of it, and just placed them on the Christ in me, I found, instead of an experience, the Christ larger than the moment's need, the Christ that had all that I should ever need who was given to me at once, and forever!

Life without the Lamb is empty. But there is an amazing freedom in coming to the end of yourself and realizing that when God invites you into the freedom of forgiveness, He gives you Himself! The Lamb of God fulfills our deepest longings! "...you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God - that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption." (I Corinthians 1:30)

Reflect on the words of Michael Card's song [God Will Provide A Lamb](#)

Read more in Bob Holmes article [Lent: Deconstructing Into Wholeness](#)